



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Democracy and Bolshevism

By A. J. SACK

Director of the Russian Information Bureau in the United States

THE Russian problem became the central European problem, and the central world problem, not a year ago, not two years ago, not since the revolution of March, 1917. The Russian problem has been the central European and the central world problem for several decades.

Let us go back to the revolution in 1905, the first open revolt of the people against the Czar's rule. If you will recall the events of the revolution of 1905-1906, you will recall also that there were moments in this revolution when it seemed that victory would rest with the people. In October, 1905, the Czar had to grant a constitution. In April, 1906, when the first Duma presented the Czar with an address demanding liberal reforms, the structure of the old régime was tottering. Do you realize what happened to the entire world at the moment when the Russian people, the democracy of Russia, was defeated by the Czar's government in 1906?

If you will recall the German literature, the military writings and even the general press, before 1914, you will find that the plan openly discussed by the German press was, in case of war, to crush France first and then turn to the East to meet the Russian armies. The German logic was that since the Czar's government was so unpopular in Russia, the population would not answer the Czar's call for mobilization, and that very probably a declaration of war would throw all Russia into the flames of a revolution. Consequently the Germans would have time enough to rush to Paris, to defeat France, and then turn to the Eastern front and snap up Russia, all in revolutionary flames. It is probable that, had the revolution in 1905 been successful, then nine years later, in 1914, Russia as a nation would have been so strongly united, and the alliance of a democratic Russia with the democracies of France and England would have been so natural that the German militarists and imperialists would not even have thought of starting the European slaughter. That means that

in 1906, when the Russian revolution was defeated, at that very moment a death sentence was signed for the children of thirteen to fifteen who were then innocently playing in the streets of Europe and of America.

The fate, therefore, of Europe and almost of the entire world depended on the events of the first revolution in Russia. It is time to understand that during the last half century the cultural, the commercial, the technical and the financial bonds between civilized peoples have grown so strong that the nations of the world have, in reality, become one body and one soul, and when there is an infection in one part of the body the entire body is in danger. The establishment of a stable, democratic government in Russia is a necessity for the entire world, and therefore the world cannot afford to remain indifferent to the political developments in Russia.

The March revolution brought into existence Prince Lvov's and then Kerensky's Cabinet. Events in Russia during the past two years are in the main a death-grapple between the Socialists, who held the majority in the provisional government, and the Bolsheviks. There is a difference between socialism and bolshevism, and this difference must be thoroughly understood by every liberal-minded person. Socialism means governmental control over production and distribution; and the great teacher of scientific socialism, Karl Marx, was at the same time the great teacher of the law of evolution. All of us would like to jump from this modern life with its unpleasantness, direct to paradise. But a perfect state is possible—if possible at all—only after centuries of development, and the great teacher of scientific socialism, Karl Marx, understood this better than anyone else. Believing in socialism, believing that governmental control over production and distribution would open a new era in the life of society, Karl Marx taught that socialism is possible only after capitalistic development. The historic mission of capitalism, according to Karl Marx, is the development through private competition of the productive forces of society. Only after the productive forces are developed and wealth is concentrated practically in the hands of a few can the democratic state enter and substitute governmental control for the control of private interests. The Socialists of Russia, the Social-Democrats

and Socialists-Revolutionists as well, understood the prosaic law of evolution. The difference between the Socialists and the Bolsheviki is plain. While the Socialists of Russia, most of them, are responsible leaders, the Bolsheviki are demagogues. In the fall of 1917 the Bolsheviki came to power because they gave the suffering masses of the Russian people promises which they have never been able to fulfil. At the moment of the bolshevist revolt, in November, 1917, there was over 8,000,000 casualties in the Russian army, with about 3,000,000 dead and about 1,000,000 disabled for life. Only an industrially developed country is able to wage a modern war, and you cannot imagine what it meant for poorly developed Russia to wage war against Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey during the three years. The Russian masses were anxious for peace. Not for a separate peace with the German imperialists but, if possible, for a general democratic peace. The responsible leaders, the provisional government, frankly stated to the masses of the Russian people that such a peace could not be obtained at that moment; that although bleeding and suffering, Russia must continue the war together with her Allies until German militarism was broken. Irresponsible bolshevist demagogues approached the masses with promises of immediate democratic peace, and more than this—of immediate realization of socialism in Russia. With the help of the German militaristic machinery they overthrew the provisional government and, after coming to power, brought to the people, instead of a general democratic peace, a shameful, separate peace with the German imperialists; instead of bread and happiness and immediate realization of socialism, a régime of starvation, destruction, murder in those parts of Russia where bolshevism rules.

The Bolsheviki are camouflaging their régime with the terms "socialism," and "democracy." In truth their régime is a caricature of these two great ideals. No one who knows the nature of socialism will ever consider the Bolsheviki as Socialists, and no one who knows the nature of democracy will consider the Bolsheviki as democrats. The Bolsheviki do not recognize the fundamental principle of democracy—the right of every member of society, men and women, to participate in the government. According to the so-called soviet constitution there are entire classes of the population which are excluded from the government.

And I wish to call attention to the fact that this soviet constitution, undemocratic as it is, is still better than the practical application of this constitution to Russian life. The Bolsheviks have excluded from the government not only entire classes of the Russian population, but they have excluded all the political parties which are opposed to their régime, the Liberals, the Constitutional-Democratic party, the Social-Democrats, the Mensheviks and the Socialists-Revolutionists.

To conclude this brief sketch of the characteristics of the bolshevist régime and its relation to the ideas of socialism and democracy, I shall quote now a document which, in my opinion, is one of the most important documents describing the conditions in Bolshevik Russia. It is the text of a telegram sent by the British High Commissioner, Mr. Bruce Lockhart, to the British Foreign Office on November 10, 1918, as published in the official *British White Book on Bolshevism*. Mr. Lockhart telegraphed:

The following points may interest Mr. Balfour:

1. The Bolsheviks have established a rule of force and oppression unequalled in the history of any autocracy.

2. Themselves the fiercest upholders of the right of free speech, they have suppressed, since coming into power, every newspaper which does not approve their policy. In this respect the socialist press has suffered most of all. Even the papers of the Internationalist Mensheviks, like Martov's, have been suppressed and closed down, and the unfortunate editors thrown into prison or forced to flee for their lives.

3. The right of holding public meetings has been abolished. The vote has been taken away from everyone except the workmen in the factories and the poorer servants, and even amongst the workmen those who dare to vote against the Bolsheviks are marked down by the bolshevist secret police as counter-revolutionaries, and are fortunate if their worst fate is to be thrown into prison, of which in Russia today it may truly be said, "many go in but few come out."

4. The worst crimes of the Bolsheviks have been against their socialist opponents. Of the countless executions which the Bolsheviks have carried out a large percentage has fallen on the heads of Socialists who had waged a life-long struggle against the old régime, but who are now denounced as counter-revolutionaries merely because they disapprove of the manner in which the Bolsheviks have discredited socialism.

5. The Bolsheviks have abolished even the most primitive forms of justice. Thousands of men and women have been shot without even the mockery of a trial, and thousands more are left to rot in the prisons under conditions to find a parallel to which one must turn to the darkest annals of Indian or Chinese history.

6. The Bolsheviki have restored the barbarous methods of torture. The examination of prisoners frequently takes place with a revolver at the unfortunate prisoner's head.

7. The Bolsheviki have established the odious practice of taking hostages. Still worse, they have struck at their political opponents through their women folk. When recently a long list of hostages was published in Petrograd, the Bolsheviki seized the wives of those men whom they could not find and threw them into prison until their husbands should give themselves up.

8. The Bolsheviki, who destroyed the Russian army, and who have always been the avowed opponents of militarism, have forcibly mobilized officers who do not share their political views, but whose technical knowledge is indispensable, and by the threat of immediate execution have forced them to fight against their fellow-countrymen in a civil war of unparalleled horror.

9. The avowed ambition of Lenin is to create civil warfare throughout Europe. Every speech of Lenin's is a denunciation of constitutional methods, and a glorification of the doctrine of physical force. With that object in view he is destroying systematically, both by execution and by deliberate starvation, every form of opposition to bolshevism. This system of "terror" is aimed chiefly at the Liberals and non-Bolshevist Socialists, whom Lenin regards as his most dangerous opponents.

10. In order to maintain their popularity with the workingmen and with their hired mercenaries, the Bolsheviki are paying their supporters enormous wages by means of an unchecked paper issue, until today money in Russia has naturally lost all value. Even according to their own figures, the Bolsheviki's expenditure exceeds the revenue by thousands of millions of roubles per annum.

Such is the picture of the bolshevist régime in Russia, and you can readily see that the Russian problem at this moment is probably not so much a political as a moral problem. The Russian people are going through impossible tortures as a consequence of Russia's participation in the war. Loyal to her allies, Russia stood at her post for three long years, sacrificing not less than 4,000,000 of her best sons. The strain of this war was too great for Russia and she collapsed, and the bolshevist régime is the result of the breakdown of her economic life. Russia is lying now in seas of blood and tears because she has sacrificed everything for the Allied cause. It is up to the Allies to help her.

To help Russia means to help the Russian people and not those who have established in Russia a new tyranny worse even than the old tyranny of the Czars. Russia's salvation lies in the establishment of a stable, democratic government through a Constituent Assembly freely chosen by the entire population on the basis of universal, direct, secret and equal suffrage. The Bol-

sheviki dispersed the first All-Russian Constituent Assembly in January, 1918, at the point of bayonets, but the idea of a Constituent Assembly, which was one of the main aspirations of the great revolution of March, 1917, is still alive, and the greatest Russian liberal, revolutionary and socialist leaders, led by such people as Catherine Breshkovsky and Nicholas Tchaikovsky, still support this idea. The American democracy cannot remain indifferent to the tragedy of the Russian people. The time has come, in my sincere opinion, when the American people must speak for the Russian democracy against those who have destroyed the new democratic institutions in Russia, who have dispersed the first All-Russian Constituent Assembly and who are doing everything in their power to prevent the convocation of another Constituent Assembly. Whatever may happen in Russia, democracy will finally win. Citizens of the United States, support the Democracy of Russia!